



**MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON WATER POLICY
REVIEW & MONITORING
MINUTES**

MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON WATER POLICY REVIEW & MONITORING

City Hall, Council Chambers

TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2023

201 S. Cortez St.

11:00AM – 12:00PM

Prescott, Arizona 86303

928-777-1130

**Minutes for the Mayor's Commission on Water Policy Review & Monitoring meeting held
January 17, 2023.**

1. Call to Order

Chairman Jim Lamerson called the meeting to order at 11:01 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Phil Goode	Mayor – Present
James (Jim) Lamerson	Chair – Present
Robert (Bob) Roecker	Vice Chair – Excused
Gary Beverly	Member – Present
Gillian Haley-Meierbachtol	Member – Excused
Peter Kroopnick	Member – Present (via Teams)
Michael Taylor	Member – Present (via Teams)
Gary Worob	Member – Excused

4. Discussion & Action Items

A. Approval of Minutes from November 15, 2022

**GARY BEVERLY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE
NOVEMBER 15, 2022 MEETING; JIM LAMERSON 2ND THE MOTION, - PASSED [4-0]**

B. Resolution No. 2022-1842 (Boards, Commissions, and Committees Code of Conduct)

Staff Liaison Marikay Whisenand provided a brief explanation regarding the Boards, Commissions, and Committees Code of Conduct forms to be signed by members of this commission.

C. Discuss Member's feedback on 2019 policy in comparison to 2022 policy

Members were requested in November to compare the 2019 Water Policy with the current 2022 Water Policy and provide general feedback. Staff Liaison Leslie Graser provided a presentation with basic comparisons between the two policies and opened up the topic for discussion.

Chairman Lamerson inquired about a process to evaluate how much water is being sold and what for, and what the City is receiving in return when issuing water allocations. Member Gary Beverly commented that he supports Chairman Lamerson's inquiry, as it pertains to the pace of development in the area. He also commented that he would like to see an example of a cost benefit analysis.

Mayor Goode added that a goal of the 2022 Water Policy was to create a clear, well-crafted and instituted water policy to be sure the pace of growth kept up with ability to provide public safety services, especially in new developments. There are some questions on how to best implement the policy going forward. He expressed hope for a more thorough analysis and recommendations from this Committee. Water representatives have stated the average acre-feet of water has been below the budget for both residential and nonresidential as a result of the 2022 policy.

Mayor Goode continued, and discussed inquiries regarding whether the water we allocate is a “use or lose situation”, and, if we have water left over, whether or not it rolls over to next period or if it resets. He discussed inquiries related to the appeal process, pertaining to a situation when a project is declined, but an appeal is approved, and if that amount of water is taken out of allocation for that time. There are terms in policy for what justifies appeal process and the criteria applied in those situations. He concluded with the goal of this commission being the continuation of reviewing and monitoring the current water policy, and focusing first on making the current policy the best it can be. Some of these more esoteric concerns, such as Tucson’s water policy, are beneficial to discuss but at a later date.

Member Beverly inquired about the urgency for further discussion on the appeal process, and the possibility of having this commission meet more frequently. Mayor Goode responded and commented that commission has been active since June of last year. We are still reviewing comparisons, and we need to focus on moving forward and determining how some of the issues should be debated and how best to do so. City Council needs to have more advice coming from this committee, as we may need to modify figures for the next water budget period.

Member Beverly commented that he has additional input, however, those may need to be reviewed at another time or addressed on a future meeting agenda. Chairman Lamerson responded that the commission needs to craft some policy recommendations for current and future City Council to be able to build on. An example could include deciding which housing types should be approved for City water supplies, such as multifamily or 6,000 square feet of single family residential.

Member Peter Kroopnick commented that with a budget in place, and even with analysis, feels water is being borrowed from water in the future. He commented that there needs to be some sort of return or reimbursement, such as a developer covering the cost of an additional well for example. Member Beverly responded and agreed with the basic premise of Member Kroopnick’s comment, and inquired about how to handle those situations. He provided examples including conservation offsets and developer requirements to save on acre feet of water, as well as improving less efficient systems in older homes or those on septic.

Mayor Goode commented in response, to keep in mind that single family homes are based on averages, including those with less efficient systems. He provided an example of an apartment complex with highly efficient systems and the ability to demonstrate how their use is approximately half of that (0.6/0.7 as compared to 0.12) of older apartment complexes. It becomes a question of allowing them a credit against their normally credited amount, so the payback is immediate, or, waiting five years for the Water Resource Management Model (WRMM). This question could become another component to utilize within a water policy to demonstrate when an applicant can show they use significantly less than average.

Member Beverly commented that he recommends the City’s water policy be consistent with that of the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR), for vetting estimates for demand to determine availability. Chairman Lamerson inquired of Ms. Graser if that was a possibility for the City.

Per Ms. Graser, edits and amendments to the water policy can be made. How they are managed needs to be thought through as far as how they interconnect with other items in the policy, and, how those edits and amendments may be pieced into the current policy. In the 2022 policy, ideas were put forward, however, there were little to no means of tracking included with them. Some examples can be found today; therefore, commission input is very important to further explore these issues.

Ms. Graser commented that to make progress, the commission needs a common decision for where it is headed. For this topic, the comparison of the 2019 Water Policy to the current 2022 Water Policy, there was little to no member feedback received. She inquired of the commission if a the quarterly update to Council should include a statement of the 2022 Water Policy being more effective than the 2019 Water Policy. Chairman Lamerson was in agreeance that it is more effective, as far as water management and conservation goals of the City.

Ms. Graser, in response to Chairman Lamerson, commented that the 2022 Water Policy was built from the framework of the 2018 Water Policy. In the 2019 Water Policy, policies were dismantled and became difficult to track. She requested of Chairman Lamerson to call on members of the commission for input on the 2022 Water Policy being more effective.

Chairman Lamerson called on Member Beverly. Per Member Beverly, the 2022 Water Policy is more effective, but does need some improvements. He added that some take away for the quarterly Council update could include that those improvements are being reviewed by the commission. Chairman Lamerson called on Member Kroopnick, who response seconded Member Beverly's comment. Member Taylor was also called on, and he agreed that the 2022 Water Policy is a step in the right direction with more work to be done to improve it.

D. Discuss Member's feedback on 2022 policy in comparison to a long-term management plan (using Tucson's plan as the example)

Ms. Graser provided a brief presentation, showing comparison of the 2022 Water Policy to a long-term water management plan. The presentation contained the following comparisons:

- Estimated volume – The policy states 1978.44 acre-feet is available
- Planning horizon – How long the estimated volume lasts is partially dependent on how much is approved each year
- Planning goals – Are not described
- WRMM functions – The 2022 policy uses 0.17 and 0.12 acre-feet references, but not for long-term planning
- Public Education – Limited in the 2022 policy

Ms. Graser emphasized that a long-term water management plan is not being built by this commission, but rather the focus is whether or not it would be more effective than a water policy. Ms. Graser inquired of Chairman Lamerson if there is value in presenting consideration of a long-term plan to City Council during the upcoming quarterly update. Chairman Lamerson confirmed yes, in response.

Ms. Graser continued and explained that member input now may be included in the next General Plan.

Member Beverly commented that he supports recommend to Council develop long term plan. The plan would tie into why we have the set of policies we do, as a tactic to implement the long-term plan. He added that a long-term water conservation plan would be beneficial as well, and should include reports on current conservation by category, conservation potential identification, justification for a set of conservation measures, and explained effectiveness.

He noted that now the policy now is for short-term management. Chairman Lamerson added that the plan would be dependent on the Council's goals for the water supply.

Member Taylor commented that the future development of a long term plan makes, and sought to clarify with Mayor Goode on if developing a plan is the goal of this group and is it a rational recommendation from the Committee. Per Mayor Goode, the likelihood is that once the current water policy is analyzed and modified to be made to be effective as much as it can be, a good assignment would be to look at the possibility of a long-term water management plan. While the general plan is looking at growth over the next 10-15 years, it seems would make sense to align such a plan with the general plan at that time.

E. 2022 Policy outcomes (July – December 2022) and City Council Meeting of 12/20/2022

a. Matrix for Data and Tracking availability for Policies 1-22

Ms. Graser provided a presentation and discussed member feedback received, and let the commission know that a copy would be sent out via email to the members.

b. Water Budget (Policies 11-13)

An update was provided by Ms. Graser, which included clarification provided by Council on December 20th, 2022, that projects that appeal the 50% rule are not included in the water budget. She also explained that water conservation efforts are still part of the water policy, in response to an inquiry by Chairman Lamerson.

c. Cost Benefit Analysis (Policy 14)

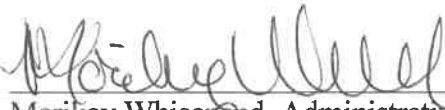
Per Ms. Graser, the Water Issues Subcommittee was presented a project on January 10, 2023. An applicant was seeking to appeal the 50% rule and chose to demonstrate benefits, such as job creation, wages, sales tax, economic impacts, etc. The Subcommittee made recommendation to Council. She explained that member input received regarding the situation included that the way the water policy is written now, it appears that any project could be subject to the requirement of demonstrating benefits. Ms. Graser concluded with this being an example of challenges to recall when considering work on the existing water policy.

F. Next Meeting's Materials

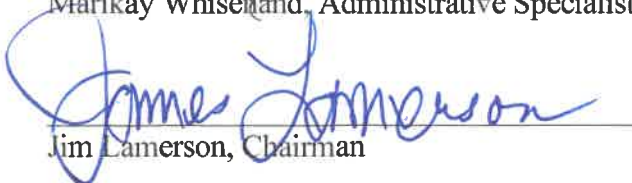
The next meeting will take place on February 21, 2023 at 11:00 a.m.

5. Adjournment

There being no further items to discuss, Mr. Lamerson adjourned the meeting at 12:05 p.m.



MariKay Whisenand, Administrative Specialist



Jim Lamerson, Chairman

Date:

2/21/2023